

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Michael Hernández, and I am a resident of Stamford and a current student at the University of Chicago. I am also a proud immigrant from Honduras.

I stand in support of HB 6616: “An Act Concerning Expansion Of Husky Health Benefits To Those Ineligible Due To Immigration Status”. Expanding access to HUSKY regardless of immigration status is an important step in ensuring our immigrant community has access to the healthcare we need. If Connecticut wants a future that includes healthy families and a stable, thriving and growing workforce that is ready to meet the needs of our future, Connecticut must ensure that these individuals up to age of 26 have access to health coverage.

I lived as an undocumented immigrant for 12 years in Connecticut before obtaining legal status. We did not have access to health care, not because we did not get sick, but because the costs were prohibitive and policies excluded us due to immigration status. I feared getting sick or going anywhere near a hospital because care was a luxury. While it took me 12 years to be able to access health care, there are thousands of people in Connecticut who are still waiting, some even longer than me. Do not let them wait another day to access the care they need and deserve.

I support HB 6616 and I ask the committee to support and pass this legislation out of committee in its current form - to expand HUSKY access to age 26. Our work does not end with expanding access up to age 12 nor with expanding access up to age 18. And that work must continue this year by expanding HUSKY access up to age 26. Looking forward, I ask the committee to work towards opening access to all immigrants regardless of age.

Thank you for your time,  
Michael Hernández.